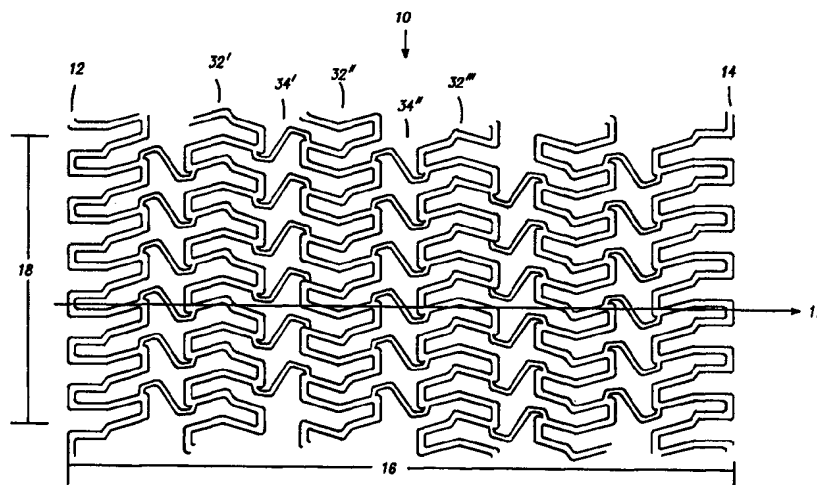




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(54) Title: TUBULAR STENT CONSISTS OF CHEVRON-SHAPE EXPANSION STRUTS AND CONTRALATERALLY ATTACHED DIAGONAL-CONNECTORS



(57) Abstract

A circumferentially connected stent in a non-expanded state with a longitudinal axis, includes a first expansion column strut pair having a first expansion strut, a second expansion strut with a joining strut. The first expansion column strut pair defines a chevron shaped slot, and a plurality of the first expansion strut pair forms a first expansion column. A second expansion column strut pair includes a first expansion strut, a second expansion strut and a joining strut. The second expansion column strut pair defines a chevron shaped slot, and a plurality of the second expansion strut pair forms a second expansion column. A first serial connecting strut column is formed of a plurality of first connecting struts, and the first connecting strut column couples the first expansion column to the second expansion column.

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Tubular Stent Consists of Chevron-shape Expansion Struts
and
Contralaterally Attached Diagonal-Connectors

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BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Field of the Invention:

This invention relates to intravascular stents, and more particularly to an intravascular stent which provides easy introduction through tortuous sections of vessels.

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Description of the Related Art:

Angioplasty, either coronary or general vascular, has advanced to become the most effective means for revascularization of stenosed vessels. In the early 1980's, angioplasty first became available for clinical practice in the coronary artery, and has since proven an effective alternative to conventional bypass graft surgery. Balloon catheter dependent angioplasty has consistently proven to be the most reliable and practical interventional procedure. Other ancillary technologies such as laser based treatment, or directional or rotational atherectomy, have proven to be either of limited effectiveness or dependent on balloon angioplasty for completion of the intended procedure. Restenosis following balloon-based angioplasty is the most serious drawback and is especially prevalent in the coronary artery system.

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Many regimens have been designed to combat restenosis, with limited success, including laser based treatment and directional or rotational atherectomy. Intravascular stenting, however, noticeably reduces the restenosis rate following angioplasty procedures. The procedure for intravascular stent placement typically involves pre-dilation of the target vessel using balloon angioplasty, followed by deployment of the stent, and expansion of the stent

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such that the dilated vessel walls are supported from the inside.

The intravascular stent functions as scaffolding for the lumen of a vessel. The scaffolding of the vessel walls by the stent serve to: (a) prevent elastic recoil of the dilated vessel wall, (b) eliminate residual stenosis of the vessel, a
5 common occurrence in balloon angioplasty procedures, (c) maintain the diameter of the stented vessel segment slightly larger than the native unobstructed vessel segments proximal and distal the stented segment, and (d) as indicated by the latest clinical data, lower the restenosis rate. Following an angioplasty procedure, the restenosis rate of stented vessels has proven
10 significantly lower than for not stented or otherwise treated vessels; treatments include drug therapy and other methods mentioned previously.

Another benefit of vessel stenting is the potential reduction of emergency bypass surgery arising from angioplasty procedures. Stenting has proven to be effective in some cases for treating impending closure of a vessel
15 during angioplasty. Stenting can also control and stabilize an unstable local intimal tear of a vessel caused by normal conduct during an angioplasty procedure. In some cases, an incomplete or less than optimal dilatation of a vessel lesion with balloon angioplasty can successfully be opened up with a stent implant.

20 Early in its development, the practice of stenting, especially in coronary arteries, had serious anticoagulation problems. However, anticoagulation techniques have since been developed and are becoming simpler and more effective. Better and easier to use regimens are continuously being introduced, including simple outpatient anticoagulation treatments, resulting in reduced
25 hospital stays for stent patients.

An example of a conventional stent patent is US 5,102,417 (hereafter the Palmaz Patent). The stent described in the Palmaz Patent consists of a series of elongated tubular members having a plurality of slots disposed substantially parallel to the longitudinal axis of the tubular members. The tubular members
30 are connected by at least one flexible connector member.

The unexpanded tubular members of the Palmaz Patent are overly rigid so that practical application is limited to short lengths. Even with implementation of the Multi-link design with flexible connector members connecting a series of tubular members, longer stents can not navigate tortuous blood vessels. Furthermore, the rigidity of the unexpanded stent increases the risk of damaging vessels during insertion. Foreshortening of the stent during insertion complicates accurate placement of the stent and reduces the area that can be covered by the expanded stent. There is, further, no method of programming the stent diameter along its longitudinal axis to achieve a tapered expanded stent, and no method of re-enforcement of stent ends or other regions is provided for.

Another example of a conventional stent patent is WO 96/03092, the Brun patent. The stent described in the Brun patent is formed of a tube having a patterned shape, which has first and second meander patterns. The even and odd first meander patterns are 180 degrees out of phase, with the odd patterns occurring between every two even patterns. The second meander patterns run perpendicular to the first meander patterns, along the axis of the tube.

Adjacent first meander patterns are connected by second meander patterns to form a generally uniform distributed pattern. The symmetrical arrangement with first and second meander patterns having sharp right angled bends allows for catching and snagging on the vessel wall during delivery. Furthermore, the large convolutions in the second meander pattern are not fully straightened out during expansion reducing rigidity and structural strength of the expanded stent. There is, further, no method of programming the stent diameter along its longitudinal axis to achieve a tapering stent design, and no method of re-enforcement of stent ends or other regions is provided for.

These and other conventional stent designs suffer in varying degrees from a variety of drawbacks including: (a) inability to negotiate bends in vessels due to columnar rigidity of the unexpanded stent, (b) lack of axio-lateral strength of the unexpanded stent, (c) significant foreshortening of the stent

during expansion, (d) limited stent length, (e) even expanded stent diameter, (f) poor crimping characteristics, (g) rough surface modulation of the unexpanded stent, (h) poor vessel coverage and tissue prolapse, (i) rough vessel friction by un-connected strut tulips, and uneven stent expansion.

5 There is a need for a stent with sufficient longitudinal flexibility in the unexpanded state to allow for navigation through tortuous vessels. There is a further need for a stent that is structurally strong in the unexpanded state such that risk of damage or distortion during delivery is minimal. A further need exists for a stent that maintains substantially the same longitudinal length during
10 expansion to allow greater coverage at the target site and simplify proper placement of the stent. Yet a further need exists for a stent design with sufficient longitudinal flexibility that long stents of up to 100 mm can be safely delivered through tortuous vessels. There is a need for a stent that is configured to expand to variable diameters along its length, such that a taper can be
15 achieved in the expanded stent to match the natural taper of the target vessel. A need exists for a stent, which has better crimping qualities, increased axial and radial strength with low metal fraction, improved surface modulations with no strut tulips, full vessel coverage without tissue prolapse, flexible during delivery but transforms into a unitized rigidity, low profile
20 during delivery, and high expansion ratio with minimal foreshortening.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Accordingly an object of the present invention is to provide a scaffold for an interior lumen of a vessel.

25 Another object of the invention is to provide a stent, which prevents recoil of the vessel following angioplasty.

A further object of the invention is to provide a stent that maintains a larger vessel lumen compared to the results obtained only with balloon angioplasty.

30 Yet another object of the invention is to provide a stent that reduces

foreshortening of a stent length when expanded.

Another object of the invention is to provide a stent with increased flexibility when delivered to a selected site in a vessel.

5 A further object of the invention is to provide a stent with a low profile when crimped over a delivery balloon of a stent assembly.

Yet a further object of the invention is to provide a stent with reduced tuliping of a stent frame.

Another object of the invention is to provide a chain mesh stent that reduces vessel "hang up" in a tortuous vessel or a vessel with curvature.

10 A further object of the invention is to provide a chain mesh stent that increases radial and axio-lateral strength of the expanded stent.

These and other objectives of the invention are achieved in a stent designed in non-expanded state. The stent of present invention is a 3-dimensional object with a generally tubular geometry, which includes inner and
15 outer surface, inner and outer diameter, an internal tubular lumen, a wall thickness and a prescribed length. To describe the design geometry of the stent of present invention, 2-dimensional cut-open illustrations of the stent are used extensively in this application. Although description of frame configurations of the stent is according to the 2-dimensional cut-open drawings, the real stent of
20 present invention is a 3-dimensional tubular object designed to function as scaffolding device inside a blood vessel or inside an anatomic tubular structure of any kind in which the stent can be implanted.

A first expansion column includes of a plurality of first expansion strut pairs of chevron-shape in upright position. A first expansion strut pair includes a first
25 expansion strut of generally a chevron-shape, which has a stair-step configuration at the center and is dissimilar to a second expansion strut configuration, adjacent to a second expansion strut of generally a chevron-shape. A first joining strut couples the first and second expansion struts of chevron-shape at a distal end of a first expansion strut pair to form a closed
30 loop. When a first expansion strut pair is joined by a first joining strut to form a

closed loop, a chevron-shaped slot is formed inside the first expansion strut pair, with a narrower slot width in the distal half, and a wider slot width in the proximal half due to the dissimilar chevron-shapes of the first and second first expansion struts of a first expansion strut pair. A second expansion strut pair
5 includes a third expansion strut of chevron-shape, which has a stair-step configuration at the center and is dissimilar to a second expansion strut configuration, adjacent to the second expansion strut of chevron-shape. A second joining strut couples the second and third expansion struts at a proximal end of the second expansion strut pair to form a closed loop. When a second
10 expansion strut pair is joined by a second joining strut to form a closed loop, a chevron-shaped slot is formed inside the second expansion strut pair, with a narrower slot width in the proximal half and a wider slot width in the distal half, due to the dissimilar chevron-shapes of the second and third expansion struts of a second expansion strut pair. A third expansion strut pair includes a fourth
15 expansion strut of chevron-shape adjacent to the third expansion strut of chevron-shape, which has a stair-step configuration at the center and is dissimilar to a fourth expansion strut configuration. A third joining strut couples the third and fourth expansion struts at a distal end of the third expansion strut pair to form a closed loop. When a third expansion strut pair is joined by a third
20 joining strut to form a closed loop, a chevron-shaped slot is formed inside the third expansion strut pair, with a narrower slot width in the distal half and a wider slot width in the proximal half, due to the dissimilar chevron-shapes of the third and fourth expansion struts of a third expansion strut pair. A fourth expansion strut pair includes a fifth expansion strut of chevron-shape, which has
25 a stair-step configuration at the center and is dissimilar to a fourth expansion strut configuration adjacent to a fourth expansion strut of chevron-shape. A fourth joining strut couples the fourth and fifth expansion struts at a proximal end of the fourth expansion strut pair. When a fourth expansion strut pair is joined by a fourth joining strut to form a closed loop, a chevron-shaped slot is
30 formed inside the fourth expansion strut pair, with a narrower slot width in the

proximal half and a wider slot width in the distal half, due to the dissimilar chevron-shapes of the fourth and fifth expansion struts of a fourth expansion strut pair. These expansion strut pairs of two dissimilar chevron-shape coupled by a joining struts to form a closed loop in an alternating proximal or distal end of the expansion strut pairs can be repeated to make the prescribed number of continuous chain of expansion strut pairs around the circumference in an unbroken fashion in the stent of present invention. A set of two consecutive chevron-shaped expansion strut pairs in an unbroken sequence is called expansion strut cycles. In this application, the illustrations contain six (6) chevron-shaped expansion strut pair cycles or twelve (12) chevron-shaped expansion strut pairs in a first expansion column in the 2-dimensional cut-open drawings. However, the number of chevron-shaped expansion strut pair or expansion strut pair cycle in a first expansion column can variably be changed according to the application requirements of the specific stent of present invention made. The variation of the number of expansion strut pair or expansion pair cycle in a first expansion column is within the scope of a tubular stent of present invention.

Although the illustrations in this application shows only a neutrally arranged up-right or upside down expansion strut pairs of chevron-configuration within the first, second or third expansion strut columns; the expansion strut pairs of chevron-configuration can be arranged in any tilted angulation within their assigned expansion columns. The first and second expansion struts of chevron-shape in a first expansion strut pair are parallel to each other, but the first and second expansion struts of chevron-shape in a first expansion strut pair do not parallel to the longitudinal axis of the tubular stent. However, the first and second expansion struts of chevron-shape in a first expansion strut pair do not have to parallel to each other. Both the parallel and non-parallel arrangement of the first and second expansion struts of chevron-shape in a first expansion strut pair are within the scope of this invention. Furthermore, first and second expansion struts of chevron-shape in a first expansion strut pair can

be made of dissimilar chevron patterns within a first expansion strut pair and within the same expansion strut column.

A first expansion strut pair first corner is formed where the first joining strut is coupled to the first expansion strut of chevron-shape, and a first
5 expansion strut pair second corner is formed where the first joining strut is coupled to the second expansion strut of chevron-shape. A second expansion strut pair first corner is formed where the second joining strut is coupled to the second expansion strut of chevron-shape, and a second expansion strut pair second corner is formed where the second joining strut is coupled to the third
10 expansion strut of chevron-shape. A third expansion strut pair first corner is formed where the third joining strut is coupled to the third expansion strut of chevron-shape, and a third expansion strut pair second corner is formed where the third joining strut is coupled to the fourth expansion strut of chevron-shape. A fourth expansion strut pair first corner is formed where the fourth joining strut
15 is coupled to the fourth expansion strut of chevron-shape, and a fourth expansion strut pair second corner is formed where the fourth joining strut is coupled to the fifth expansion strut.

A second expansion column consists of a plurality of second expansion strut pairs of generally a chevron-shape in upside down position. A first expansion
20 strut pair includes a first expansion strut of a chevron-shape, which has a stair-step configuration at the center and is dissimilar to a second expansion strut configuration, adjacent to a second expansion strut of a chevron-shape. A first joining strut couples the first and second expansion struts of chevron-shape at a proximal end of a first expansion strut pair to form a closed loop. When a first
25 expansion strut pair is joined by a first joining strut to form a closed loop, a chevron-shaped slot is formed inside the first expansion strut pair, with a narrower slot width in the proximal half and a wider slot width in the distal half, due to the dissimilar chevron-shapes of the first and second first expansion struts of a first expansion strut pair. A second expansion strut pair includes a
30 third expansion strut of chevron-shape, which has a stair-step configuration at

the center and is dissimilar to a second expansion strut configuration, adjacent to the second expansion strut of chevron-shape. A second joining strut couples the second and third expansion struts at a distal end of the second expansion strut pair to form a closed loop. When a second expansion strut pair is joined by a second joining strut to form a closed loop, a chevron-shaped slot is formed inside the second expansion strut pair, with a narrower slot width in the distal half and a wider slot width in the proximal half, due to the dissimilar chevron-shapes of the second and third expansion struts of a second expansion strut pair. A third expansion strut pair includes a fourth expansion strut of chevron-shape adjacent to the third expansion strut of chevron-shape, which has a stair-step configuration at the center and is dissimilar to a fourth expansion strut configuration. A third joining strut couples the third and fourth expansion struts at a proximal end of the third expansion strut pair to form a closed loop. When a third expansion strut pair is joined by a third joining strut to form a closed loop, a chevron-shaped slot is formed inside the third expansion strut pair, with a narrower slot width in the proximal half and a wider slot width in the distal half, due to the dissimilar chevron-shapes of the third and fourth expansion struts of a third expansion strut pair. A fourth expansion strut pair includes a fifth expansion strut of chevron-shape, which has a stair-step configuration at the center and is dissimilar to a fourth expansion strut configuration, adjacent to a fourth expansion strut of chevron-shape. A fourth joining strut couples the fourth and fifth expansion struts at a distal end of the fourth expansion strut pair. When a fourth expansion strut pair is joined by a fourth joining strut to form a closed loop, a chevron-shaped slot is formed inside the fourth expansion strut pair, with a narrower slot width in the distal half and a wider slot width in the proximal half, due to the dissimilar chevron-shapes of the fourth and fifth expansion struts of a fourth expansion strut pair. These expansion strut pairs of two dissimilar chevron-shape coupled by a joining struts to form a closed loop in an alternating proximal or distal end of the expansion strut pairs can be repeated to make the prescribed number of continuous chain of expansion strut

pairs in a first expansion column around the circumference in an unbroken fashion in a tubular stent of present invention. A set of two consecutive chevron-shaped expansion strut pairs in an unbroken sequence is called expansion strut cycles. In this application, the illustrations contain six (6)
5 chevron-shaped expansion strut pair cycles or twelve (12) chevron-shaped expansion strut pairs in a second expansion column in the 2-dimensional cut-open drawings. However, the number of chevron-shaped expansion strut pairs or expansion strut pair cycles in a second expansion column can variably be changed according to the application requirements of the specific stent made of
10 present invention. The variation of the number of expansion strut pairs or expansion pair cycles in a second expansion column is within the scope of a tubular stent of present invention.

Although the illustrations in this application shows only a neutrally arranged upright or upside down expansion strut pairs of chevron-configuration
15 within the first, second or third expansion strut columns; the expansion strut pairs of chevron-shape can be arranged in any tilted angulation within their assigned expansion columns. The first and second expansion struts of chevron-shape in a first expansion strut pair in a second expansion column are parallel to each other, but the first and second expansion struts of chevron-shape in a first
20 expansion strut pair in a second expansion column do not parallel to the longitudinal axis of the tubular stent. However, the first and second expansion struts of chevron-shape in a first expansion strut pair in a second expansion column do not have to parallel to each other. Both the parallel and non-parallel arrangement of the first and second expansion struts of chevron-shape in a first
25 expansion strut pair in a second expansion column is within the scope of this invention. Furthermore, first and second expansion struts of chevron-shape in a first expansion strut pair in a second expansion column can be made of dissimilar chevron patterns as shown in the illustrations of this provisional application. However, the first and second expansion struts of chevron-shape in
30 a first expansion strut pair in a second expansion column can be made of similar

chevron-shapes; the first and second expansion struts in a first expansion strut pair may consists of two straight chevron-shape struts or the first and second expansion struts in a first expansion strut pair may consists of two stair-step chevron-shape struts.

5 A first expansion strut pair first corner is formed where the first joining strut is coupled to the first expansion strut of chevron-shape, and a first expansion strut pair second corner is formed where the first joining strut is coupled to the second expansion strut of chevron-shape. A second expansion strut pair first corner is formed where the second joining strut is coupled to the
10 second expansion strut of chevron-shape, and a second expansion strut pair second corner is formed where the second joining strut is coupled to the third expansion strut of chevron-shape. A third expansion strut pair first corner is formed where the third joining strut is coupled to the third expansion strut of chevron-shape, and a third expansion strut pair second corner is formed where
15 the third joining strut is coupled to the fourth expansion strut of chevron-shape. A fourth expansion strut pair first corner is formed where the fourth joining strut is coupled to the fourth expansion strut of chevron-shape, and a fourth expansion strut pair second corner is formed where the fourth joining strut is coupled to the fifth expansion strut.

20 A first connecting strut column is formed of a plurality of first connecting struts. Each first connecting strut in a first connecting strut column includes a connecting strut proximal section, a connecting strut distal section and a connecting strut intermediate section. A first connecting strut proximal section has two parts; a first short part that is coupled at a perpendicular or slant
25 angle to the outer side of the distal end of a second expansion strut of first expansion strut pair in a first expansion column, and a second long part that is coupled to the first short part proximally and to the intermediate section distally. The second long part of first connecting strut proximal section generally
30 parallels to the distal half of a second expansion strut of chevron-shape of first expansion strut pair in a first expansion column, although the second long part

can be non-parallel to the distal half of a second expansion strut of chevron-shape of first expansion strut pair in a first expansion column, as an alternative configuration. A first connecting strut distal section also has two parts; a first short part that is coupled at a perpendicular or slant angle to the outer side of the proximal end of a first expansion strut of a first expansion strut pair in a second expansion column, and a second long part that is coupled to the first short part distally and to the intermediate section proximally. The second long part generally parallels to the proximal half of a first expansion strut of chevron-shape of a first expansion strut pair in a second expansion column, although the second long part can be non-parallel to the proximal half of a first expansion strut of chevron-shape of first expansion strut pair in a second expansion column, as an alternative configuration. A first connecting strut intermediate section proximal end is coupled at a slant angle to the distal end of first connecting strut proximal section long part and the first connecting strut intermediate section distal end is coupled at a slant angle to the proximal end of a first connecting strut distal section long part. The intermediate section of a first connecting strut traverses diagonally through the inter-connecting space between a first expansion strut pair closed loop in a first expansion strut column and a first expansion strut pair closed loop in a second expansion strut column. This diagonal course of the intermediate section of the first connecting strut is a key feature for contralaterally attaching the proximal and distal end of a first connecting strut to the opposite sides of the two apposed closed loop expansion strut pair in a first expansion column and a second expansion column. Because they attach to the opposite sides of the apposed closed loop expansion strut pairs in a first and second expansion column, the proximal and distal ends of a first connecting strut points to the opposite direction as they join with the respective attachment sites.

A third expansion column consists of a plurality of third expansion strut pairs of generally a chevron-shape in upright position. A first expansion strut pair includes a first expansion strut of a chevron-shape, which has a stair-step

configuration at the center and is dissimilar to a second expansion strut configuration, adjacent to a second expansion strut of a chevron-shape. A first joining strut couples the first and second expansion struts of chevron-shape at a proximal end of a first expansion strut pair to form a closed loop. When a first expansion strut pair is joined by a first joining strut to form a closed loop, a chevron-shaped slot is formed inside the first expansion strut pair, with a narrower slot width in the proximal half and a wider slot width in the distal half, due to the dissimilar chevron-shapes of the first and second first expansion struts of a first expansion strut pair. A second expansion strut pair includes a third expansion strut of chevron-shape, which has a stair-step configuration at the center and is dissimilar to a second expansion strut configuration, adjacent to the second expansion strut of chevron-shape. A second joining strut couples the second and third expansion struts at a distal end of the second expansion strut pair to form a closed loop. When a second expansion strut pair is joined by a second joining strut to form a closed loop, a chevron-shaped slot is formed inside the second expansion strut pair, with a narrower slot width in the distal half and a wider slot width in the proximal half, due to the dissimilar chevron-shapes of the second and third expansion struts of a second expansion strut pair. A third expansion strut pair includes a fourth expansion strut of chevron-shape adjacent to the third expansion strut of chevron-shape, which has a stair-step configuration at the center and is dissimilar to a fourth expansion strut configuration. A third joining strut couples the third and fourth expansion struts at a proximal end of the third expansion strut pair to form a closed loop. When a third expansion strut pair is joined by a third joining strut to form a closed loop, a chevron-shaped slot is formed inside the third expansion strut pair, with a narrower slot width in the proximal half and a wider slot width in the distal half, due to the dissimilar chevron-shapes of the third and fourth expansion struts of a third expansion strut pair. A fourth expansion strut pair includes a fifth expansion strut of chevron-shape, which has a stair-step configuration at the center and is dissimilar to a fourth expansion strut configuration, adjacent to a

fourth expansion strut of chevron-shape. A fourth joining strut couples the fourth and fifth expansion struts at a distal end of the fourth expansion strut pair. When a fourth expansion strut pair is joined by a fourth joining strut to form a closed loop, a chevron-shaped slot is formed inside the fourth expansion strut pair, with a narrower slot width in the distal half and a wider slot width in the proximal half, due to the dissimilar chevron-shapes of the fourth and fifth expansion struts of a fourth expansion strut pair. These expansion strut pairs of two dissimilar chevron-shape coupled by a joining struts to form a closed loop at an alternating proximal or distal end of the expansion strut pairs can be repeated to make the prescribed number of expansion strut pairs in an unbroken fashion around the circumference in a tubular stent of present invention. A set of two consecutive chevron-shaped expansion strut pairs in an unbroken sequence is called expansion strut cycles. In this application, the illustrations contain six (6) chevron-shaped expansion strut pair cycles or twelve (12) chevron-shaped expansion strut pairs in a third expansion column in the 2-dimensional cut-open drawings. However, the number of chevron-shaped expansion strut pairs or expansion strut pair cycles in a third expansion column can variably be changed according to the application requirements of the specific stent of present invention made. The variation of the number of expansion strut pairs or expansion strut pair cycles in a third expansion column is within the scope of a tubular stent of present invention.

Although the illustrations in this application shows only a neutrally arranged upright or upside down expansion strut pairs of chevron-configuration within the first, second or third expansion strut columns; the expansion strut pairs of chevron-shape can be arranged in any tilted angulation within their assigned expansion columns. The first and second expansion struts of chevron-shape in a first expansion strut pair in a second expansion column are parallel to each other, but the first and second expansion struts of chevron-shape in a first expansion strut pair in a second expansion column do not parallel to the longitudinal axis of the tubular stent. However, the first and second expansion

struts of chevron-shape in a first expansion strut pair in a third expansion column do not have to parallel to each other. Both the parallel and non-parallel arrangement of the first and second expansion struts of chevron-shape in a first expansion strut pair in a third expansion column is within the scope of a tubular stent of present invention. Furthermore, first and second expansion struts of chevron-shape in a first expansion strut pair in a third expansion column can be made of dissimilar chevron patterns as shown in the illustrations of this provisional application. However, the first and second expansion struts of chevron-shape in a first expansion strut pair in a third expansion column can be made of similar chevron-shapes; the first and second expansion struts in a first expansion strut pair may consists of two straight chevron-shape struts or the first and second expansion struts in a first expansion strut pair may consists of two stair-step chevron-shape struts.

A first expansion strut pair first corner is formed where the first joining strut is coupled to the first expansion strut of chevron-shape, and a first expansion strut pair second corner is formed where the first joining strut is coupled to the second expansion strut of chevron-shape. A second expansion strut pair first corner is formed where the second joining strut is coupled to the second expansion strut of chevron-shape, and a second expansion strut pair second corner is formed where the second joining strut is coupled to the third expansion strut of chevron-shape. A third expansion strut pair first corner is formed where the third joining strut is coupled to the third expansion strut of chevron-shape, and a third expansion strut pair second corner is formed where the third joining strut is coupled to the fourth expansion strut of chevron-shape. A fourth expansion strut pair first corner is formed where the fourth joining strut is coupled to the fourth expansion strut of chevron-shape, and a fourth expansion strut pair second corner is formed where the fourth joining strut is coupled to the fifth expansion strut.

A second connecting strut column is formed of a plurality of second connecting struts. Each first connecting strut in a second connecting strut

column includes a connecting strut proximal section, a connecting strut distal section and a connecting strut intermediate section. A first connecting strut proximal section has two parts; a first short part that is coupled at a perpendicular or slant angle to the outer side of the distal end of a second expansion strut of first expansion strut pair in a second expansion column, and a second long part that is coupled to the first short part proximally and to the intermediate section distally. The second long part of first connecting strut proximal section generally parallels to the distal half of a second expansion strut of chevron-shape of second expansion strut pair in a second expansion column, although the second long part can be non-parallel to the distal half of a second expansion strut of chevron-shape of second expansion strut pair in a second expansion column, as an alternative configuration. A first connecting strut distal section also has two parts; a first short part that is coupled at a perpendicular or slant angle to the outer side of the proximal end of a second expansion strut of a first expansion strut pair in a third expansion column, and a second long part that is coupled to the first short part distally and to the intermediate section proximally. The second long part generally parallels to the proximal half of a second expansion strut of chevron-shape of a first expansion strut pair in a third expansion column, although the second long part can be non-parallel to the proximal half of a second expansion strut of chevron-shape of first expansion strut pair in a third expansion column, as an alternative configuration. A first connecting strut intermediate section proximal end is coupled at a slant angle to the distal end of first connecting strut proximal section long part and the first connecting strut intermediate section distal end is coupled at a slant angle to the proximal end of a first connecting strut distal section long part. The intermediate section of a second connecting strut traverses diagonally through the inter-connecting space between a first expansion strut pair closed loop in a second expansion column and a first expansion strut pair closed loop in a third expansion column. This diagonal course of the intermediate section of the first connecting strut is a key feature for contralaterally attaching the proximal and

distal end of a second connecting strut to the opposite sides of the two apposed closed loop expansion strut pairs in a first expansion column and a second expansion column. Because they attach to the opposite sides of the apposed closed loop expansion strut pairs in a first and second expansion column, the proximal and distal ends of a second connecting strut points to the opposite directions as they join with the respective attachment sites.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIGURE 1 – A cut open 2-dimensional view of the strut pattern of stent 10 of present invention in an unexpanded state.

FIGURE 2 – A Magnified view of key area of the stent 10 shown in cut-open view to clearly mark the essential features of the stent 10; the expansion columns 32', 32'', 32''', the connecting columns 34', 43'', the chevron-shaped expansion struts 42', 42'', 42''', the diagonal connecting struts 44', 44'', the closed loop 48', 48'', 48''' expansion strut pairs, the stent cells 36', 36'', the chevron shaped slot widths 38'-39', 38''-39'', 38'''-38''' and 40'-41', 40''-41'', 40'''-41'''.

FIGURE 3 – An enlarged view of the stent 10 in its entirety in 2-dimensional cut open drawing in an unexpanded state to illustrate the arrangements of the expansion columns 32', 32'', 32''', the connecting columns 44', 44'', the proximal and distal end expansion rings 13, 15, and formation of stent cells 36', 36'' around the circumference 18 and along the longitudinal axis 17 to construct the stent 10 in an unbroken chain-mesh pattern.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

In the **FIGURE 1**, The entire tubular stent 10 is laid out in a 2-dimensional drawing to illustrate the orientation of the stent 10 in an unexpanded state. The stent 10 has a continuous chain-mesh pattern formed of

the expansion strut columns 32 and the connecting strut columns 34 between the expansion columns 32. The longitudinal axis 17 and the stent length 16 are arranged horizontally with the proximal end 12 on the left and the distal end 14 on the right.

5 The **FIGURE 2** and **FIGURE 3** would be used intermingling through out the description of this application of a tubular stent 10.

 To describe the design geometry of the stent 10 of present invention, only the 2-dimensional cut-open illustrations of the unexpanded stent 10 are used. Although description of strut frame configuration of the stent 10 is
10 depicted in the 2-dimensional cut-open drawings, the stent 10 of present invention is a 3-dimensional tubular object designed to function as a scaffolding device when it is expanded inside a blood vessel, or inside an anatomic tubular structure of any kind in which the stent 10 can be implanted.

 A first expansion column 32' includes of a plurality of first expansion
15 strut 42' pairs of dissimilar chevron-shape in upright position. A first expansion strut pair includes a first expansion strut of a quasi-chevron shape, which has a stair-step or a "stepped bridge" configuration with a vertex or apex 33' at the center, which is dissimilar to the adjacent second expansion strut of generally a symmetrical chevron-shape with an apex or vertex 43' at the center. A first
20 joining strut 46' couples the first and second expansion struts 42' of chevron or quasi-chevron shape at a distal end of a first expansion strut pair to form a closed loop 48'. When a first expansion strut 42' pair is joined by a first joining strut 46' to form a closed loop 48' at a distal end, a chevron-shaped or quasi-chevron shaped slot is formed inside the first expansion strut pair closed loop
25 48' with a proximal wide section 40' and a distal narrow section 41' of the slot, due to the dissimilar chevron-shapes of the first and second first expansion strut 42' pairs in a first expansion column 32'.

 A second expansion strut pair includes a third expansion strut 42' of
30 generally a quasi-chevron shape with a stair-step or "stepped bridge" configuration at the vertex or apex 33' at the center, which is dissimilar to the

adjacent second expansion strut 42' of generally a symmetrical chevron-shape with a vertex or apex 43' at the center. A second joining strut 46' couples the second and third expansion struts 42' at a proximal end of a second expansion strut 42' pair to form a second closed loop 48'. When a second expansion strut 42' pair is joined by a joining strut 46' to form a second closed loop 48', a chevron shaped or quasi-chevron shaped slot is formed inside the second closed loop 48' with a proximal narrow section 38' and a distal wide section 39', due to the dissimilar chevron-shapes of the second and third expansion struts 42' of a second expansion strut 42' pair.

A third expansion strut pair includes a fourth expansion strut 42' of generally a symmetrical chevron-shape with a vertex or apex 43' at the center, adjacent to a third expansion strut 42' of a quasi-chevron shape, which has a stair-step or "stepped bridge" configuration with a vertex or apex 33' at the center. A third joining strut 46' couples the third and fourth expansion struts 42' at a distal end of a third expansion strut 42' pair to form a third closed loop 48'. When a third expansion strut pair is joined by a third joining strut 46' to form a closed loop 48', a chevron-shaped or quasi-chevron shaped slot is formed inside the third closed loop 48' with a proximal wide section 40' and a distal narrow section 41', due to the dissimilar chevron-shape configurations of the fourth and third expansion struts 42' of a third expansion strut pair.

A fourth expansion strut pair includes a fifth expansion strut 42' of a quasi-chevron shape with a stair-step or "stepped bridge" configuration with a vertex apex 33' at the center, adjacent to a fourth expansion strut 42' of a symmetrical chevron-shape with a vertex or apex 43' at the center. A fourth joining strut 46' couples the fourth and fifth expansion struts 42' at a proximal end of a fourth expansion strut pair to form a closed loop 48'. When a fourth expansion strut pair is joined by a fourth joining strut 46' to form a closed loop 48', a quasi-chevron shaped slot is formed inside the fourth expansion strut pair closed loop 48' with a proximal narrow section 38' and a distal wide section 39', due to dissimilar chevron-shapes of the fourth and fifth expansion struts

42' of a fourth expansion strut pair.

These expansion strut pairs of two dissimilar chevron-shapes coupled by a joining strut 46' to form a closed loop 48' in an alternating proximal or distal end of the expansion strut pairs can be repeated to make the prescribed number of continuous chain of expansion strut pairs around the circumference in an unbroken fashion in the stent 10 of present invention. A set of two consecutive chevron-shaped expansion strut 42' pairs in an unbroken sequence is called expansion strut cycles. In this application, Figure 1 & 3 contain six (6) quasi-chevron shaped expansion strut cycles or twelve (12) chevron-shaped expansion strut pairs in a first expansion column 32' in the 2-dimensional cut-open drawings of the unexpanded stent 10 of present invention. However, the number of chevron-shaped expansion strut 42' pairs or expansion strut 42' cycles in a first expansion column 32' can variably be changed according to the application requirements of the specific stent 10 made of the present invention. Variation of the number of expansion strut pairs or expansion strut cycles in a first expansion column 32' is within the scope of a tubular stent 10 of present invention.

Although the illustrations in this application show only a neutrally arranged upright or upside down expansion strut 42' pairs of chevron-configuration within the first 32', second 32'' or third 32''' expansion strut column; the expansion strut pairs of chevron-configuration can be arranged in any tilted angulation within their assigned expansion column 32. The first and second expansion struts 42' of dissimilar chevron-shape in a first expansion strut 42' pair in a first expansion column 32' are parallel to each other. The longitudinal axis 58' of proximal half section of the first expansion strut 42' is parallel to the longitudinal axis 60' of proximal half section of the second expansion strut 42', and the longitudinal axis 59' of distal half section of the first expansion strut 42' to the longitudinal axis 61' of distal half section of the second expansion strut 42'. However, the first and second expansion struts 42' of chevron-shape in a first expansion strut pair in the first expansion column 32'

do not have to parallel to each other. But the first and second expansion struts 42' of chevron-shape in a first expansion strut pair do not parallel to the longitudinal axis 17 of the tubular stent 10. Both the parallel and non-parallel arrangement of the first and second expansion struts 42' of chevron-shape in a first expansion strut pair in a first expansion column 32' are within the scope of a tubular stent 10 of present invention. Furthermore, first and second expansion struts 42' of chevron-shape in a first expansion strut pair can be made of similar chevron pattern in a first expansion column 32'.

A first expansion strut pair first corner 54' is formed where the first joining strut 46' is coupled to the first expansion strut 42' and a first expansion strut pair second corner 56' is formed where the first joining strut 46' is coupled to the second expansion strut 42' in the first expansion column 32'. A second expansion strut pair first corner 54' is formed where the second joining strut 46' is coupled to the second expansion strut 42', and a second expansion strut pair second corner 56' is formed where the second joining strut 46' is coupled to the third expansion strut 42'. A third expansion strut pair first corner 54' is formed where the third joining strut 46' is coupled to the third expansion strut 42', and a third expansion strut pair second corner 56' is formed where the third joining strut 46' is coupled to the fourth expansion strut 42'. A fourth expansion strut pair first corner 54' is formed where the fourth joining strut 46' is coupled to the fourth expansion strut 42', and a fourth expansion strut pair second corner 56' is formed where the fourth joining strut 42' is coupled to the fifth expansion strut 42'. Likewise, any number of expansion strut pair are being joined by a respective joining strut 46' to form the first 54' and second 56' corners to form a prescribed number of continuous chain of expansion strut pairs in a tubular stent 10 of present invention.

A second expansion column 32'' consists of a plurality of second expansion strut 42'' pair of dissimilar chevron-shape in upside down position. A first expansion strut pair includes a first expansion strut 42'' of a quasi-chevron shape, which has a stair-step or 'stepped bridge' configuration with an upside

down vertex or apex 33' at the center, adjacent to a second expansion strut 32'' of a symmetrical chevron-shape with an upside down vertex or apex 43'' at the center. A first joining strut 46'' couples the first and second expansion struts 42'' of dissimilar chevron-shape at a proximal end of a first expansion strut pair to form a closed loop 48''. When a first expansion strut pair is joined by a first joining strut 46'' to form a closed loop 48', a quasi-chevron shaped slot of an uneven width is formed inside the first expansion strut pair closed loop 48'', with a proximal narrow section 38'' and a distal wide section 39'', due to the dissimilar chevron-shapes of the first and second expansion struts 42'' of a first expansion strut pair. A second expansion strut pair includes a third expansion strut 32'' of a quasi-chevron shape, which has a stair-step or "stepped bridge" configuration with a downward vertex or apex 33'' at the center, adjacent to a second expansion strut 32'' of a symmetrical chevron-shape with a downward vertex or apex 43'' at the center. A second joining strut 46'' couples the third and second expansion struts 42'' of dissimilar chevron-shape at a distal end of a second expansion strut pair to form a closed loop 48''. When a second expansion strut pair is joined by a second joining strut 46'' to form a closed loop 48', a quasi-chevron shaped slot is formed inside the second expansion strut pair closed loop 48'' with a proximal wide section 40'' and a distal narrow section 41'', due to the dissimilar chevron-shapes of the second and third expansion struts 42'' of a second expansion strut pair.

A third expansion strut pair includes a fourth expansion strut 42'' of a symmetrical chevron-shape with a downward vertex or apex 43'' at the center, adjacent to a third expansion strut 42'' of a quasi-chevron shape, which has a stair-step or "stepped bridge" configuration with a downward vertex or apex 33'' at the center. A third joining strut 46'' couples the third and fourth expansion struts 42'' of dissimilar chevron-shape at a proximal end of a third expansion strut pair to form a closed loop 48''. When a third expansion strut 42'' pair is joined by a third joining strut 46'' to form a closed loop 48'', a quasi-chevron shaped slot is formed inside the third expansion strut pair closed

loop 48'' with a proximal narrow section 38'' and a distal wide section 39'', due to dissimilar chevron-shapes of the third and fourth expansion struts 42'' of a third expansion strut pair.

5 A fourth expansion strut pair includes a fifth expansion strut 42'' of a quasi-chevron shape, which has a stair-step or "stepped bridge" configuration with a downward vertex or apex 33'' at the center, adjacent to a fourth expansion strut of generally a symmetrical chevron-shape with a downward vertex or apex 43'' at the center. A fourth joining strut 46'' couples the fourth and fifth expansion struts 42'' at a distal end of a fourth expansion strut pair to form a closed loop 48''. When a fourth expansion strut pair is joined by a fourth joining strut 46'' to form a closed loop 48'', an uneven quasi-chevron shaped slot is formed inside the fourth expansion strut pair closed loop 48'' with a proximal wide section 40'' and a distal narrow section 41'', due to dissimilar chevron-shapes of the fourth and fifth expansion struts 42' of a fourth expansion strut pair.

15 These expansion strut pairs of two dissimilar chevron-shaped struts 42'' coupled by a joining strut 46'' to form a closed loop 48'' in proximal or distal end of the expansion strut pairs in an alternating pattern can be repeated to make the prescribed number of continuous chain of expansion strut pairs around the circumference in an unbroken fashion in the stent 10 of present invention. A set of two consecutive dissimilar chevron-shaped expansion strut pairs in an unbroken sequence is called expansion strut cycles. In this application, a second expansion column 32'' of Figure 1 & 2 contain six (6) chevron-shaped expansion strut pair cycles or twelve (12) chevron-shaped expansion strut 42'' pairs in the 2-dimensional cut-open drawings of the unexpanded stent 10 of present invention. However, the number of chevron-shaped expansion strut pairs or expansion strut pair cycles in a second expansion column 32'' can variably be changed according to the application requirements of the specific stent 10 made. Variation of the number of expansion strut pairs or expansion strut pair cycles in a second expansion column 32'' is within the scope of a

tubular stent 10 of present invention.

Although the illustrations in this application shows only a neutrally arranged, and non-parallel to the longitudinal axis 17 of the stent 10, upright or upside down expansion strut pairs of chevron-configuration within the first 32' or second 32'' expansion strut columns; the expansion strut pairs of chevron-configuration can be arranged in any tilted angulation within their assigned expansion column 32. The first and second expansion struts 42'' of dissimilar chevron-shape of a first expansion strut pair in a second expansion column 32'' are parallel to each other; with the longitudinal axis 58'' of proximal half section of the stair-step or "stepped bridge" chevron strut 42'' to the longitudinal axis 60'' of proximal half section of a symmetrical chevron shape strut 42'', and the longitudinal axis 59'' of distal half section of the stair-step or "stepped bridge" chevron strut 42'' to the longitudinal axis 61'' of distal half section of the symmetrical chevron strut 42'' of the first expansion strut pair in the second expansion column 32''. But the first and second expansion struts 42'' of dissimilar chevron-shape in a second expansion column 32'' do not parallel to the longitudinal axis 17 of the tubular stent 10. However, the first and second expansion struts 42'' of dissimilar chevron-shape in a second expansion column 32'' may not have to parallel to each other. Both the parallel and non-parallel arrangement of the first and second expansion struts 42'' of dissimilar chevron-shape in a second expansion column 32'' are within the scope of a tubular stent 10 of present invention. Furthermore, first and second expansion struts 42'' of dissimilar chevron-shape in an expansion strut pair in a second expansion column 32'' can be made of similar chevron patterns within a second expansion column 32''. The proximal section 58' of the first expansion strut 42' of a first expansion strut pair in a first expansion column 32' is parallel to the distal section 59'' of a first expansion strut 42'' of a first expansion strut pair in the second expansion column 32''. The second section 59' of a first expansion strut 42' of a first expansion strut pair in a first expansion column 32' parallels to a first section 58'' of a first expansion strut 42'' of a first expansion strut pair

in a second expansion column 32''. The proximal section 60' of the first expansion strut 42' of a first expansion strut pair in a first expansion column 32' is parallel to the distal section 61'' of a first expansion strut 42'' of a first expansion strut pair in the second expansion column 32''. The second section 61' of a first expansion strut 42' of a first expansion strut pair in a first expansion column 32' parallels to a first section 60'' of a first expansion strut 42'' of a first expansion strut pair in a second expansion column 32''. Although in FIGURE 2 & FIGURE 3, certain sections of first strut pair in the first expansion column 32' parallels to a corresponding certain sections of first strut pair in the second expansion column 32'', these respective sections in a first expansion column 32' and second expansion column 32'' do not have to parallel to each other. This parallel or non-parallel variation of the sections of expansion struts 42' in a first expansion column 32' and the sections of expansion struts 42'' in a second expansion column 32'' is within the scope of stent 10 of present invention.

In the second expansion column 32'', a first expansion strut pair first corner 54'' is formed where the first joining strut 46'' is coupled to the first expansion strut 42'', and a first expansion strut pair second corner 56'' is formed where the first joining strut 46'' is coupled to the second expansion strut 42''. A second expansion strut pair first corner 54'' is formed where the second joining strut 46'' is coupled to the second expansion strut 42'', and a second expansion strut pair second corner 56'' is formed where the second joining strut 46'' is coupled to the third expansion strut 42''. A third expansion strut pair first corner 54'' is formed where the third joining strut 46'' is coupled to the third expansion strut 42'', and a third expansion strut pair second corner 56'' is formed where the third joining strut 46'' is coupled to the fourth expansion strut 42''. A fourth expansion strut pair first corner 54'' is formed where the fourth joining strut 46'' is coupled to the fourth expansion strut 42'', and a fourth expansion strut pair second corner 56'' is formed where the fourth joining strut 46'' is coupled to the fifth expansion strut 42''. Likewise, a number of

expansion strut pair being formed by a joining strut 46'' to form the first 54'' and second 56'' corners in the expansion strut pair in the second expansion column 32'' can continue until a prescribed number of expansion strut pairs or cycles is reached in a stent 10 of present invention.

5 A first connecting strut column 34' is formed of a plurality of first connecting struts 44'. Each first connecting strut 44' in a first connecting strut column 34' includes a connecting strut proximal section, a connecting strut distal section and a connecting strut intermediate section 74'. A first connecting strut proximal section has two parts; a first short part or a "stem" 66' that is
10 coupled at a perpendicular or slant angle to the outer side of the distal end of a second expansion 42' strut of first expansion strut pair in a first expansion column 32', and a second long part 68' that is coupled to the "stem" 66' proximally and to the intermediate section 74' distally. The second long part 68' of first connecting strut 44' proximal section generally parallels to the distal half
15 section of a second expansion strut 42' of chevron-shape of first expansion strut pair in a first expansion column 32', although the second long part 68' can be non-parallel to the distal half section of a second expansion strut 42' of chevron-shape of first expansion strut pair in a first expansion column 32', as an alternative configuration. A first connecting strut 44' distal section also has two
20 parts; a first short part or "stem" 70' that is coupled at a perpendicular or slant angle to the outer side of the proximal end of a first expansion strut 42' of a first expansion strut pair in a second expansion column 32'', and a second long part 72' that is coupled to the first short part or stem 70' distally and to the intermediate section 74' proximally. The second long part 72' generally
25 parallels to the proximal half section of a first expansion strut 42' of quasi-chevron shape of a first expansion strut pair in a second expansion column 32'', although the second long part 72' can be non-parallel to the proximal half section of a first expansion strut 42'' of quasi-chevron shape of first expansion strut pair in a second expansion column 32'', as an alternative configuration. A
30 first connecting strut 44' intermediate section 74' proximal end is coupled at a

slant angle to the distal end of first connecting strut 44' proximal section long part 68' in a junction 76', and the first connecting strut 44' intermediate section 74' distal end is coupled at a slant angle to the proximal end of a first connecting strut distal section long part 72' at a junction 78'. The intermediate section 74' of a first connecting strut 44' traverses diagonally through the inter-connecting space between a first expansion strut pair closed loop 48' in a first expansion column 32' and a first expansion strut pair closed loop 48'' in a second expansion column 32''. This diagonal course of the intermediate section 74' of the first connecting strut 44' is a key feature for contralaterally attaching the proximal end 62' and distal end 64' of a first connecting strut 44' to the opposite sides (or Contralateral sides) of the two apposed closed loops 48', 48'' respectively; between a closed loop 48' in a first expansion column 32' and a closed loop 48'' in a second expansion column 32''. Because they attach to the opposite sides of the apposed closed loops 48', 48'' respectively in a first 32' and a second 32'' expansion column, the proximal end 62' with its stem 66' and distal end 64' with its stem 70' of a first connecting strut 44' points to the opposite directions as they join to the respective attachment sites. There are six (6) connecting struts 44' in the first connecting column 34'. Each of these six (6) connecting strut 44' attaches to their respective attachment sites in the first 32' and second 32'' expansion columns like the first connecting strut 44' described above, in an unbroken fashion around the circumference 18 of the stent 10, to form a tubular structure consists of a first expansion column 32', a first connecting column 34' and a second expansion column 32'' with a longitudinal axis 17. When an unbroken tubular stent 10 is formed by a first expansion column 32', second expansion column 32'' and a first connecting column 34', there are six (6) asymmetrical stent cells 36' formed in the tubular structure. In each of the stent cell 36', there are two quasi-chevron shape slots; a proximal slot in the proximal end and a distal slot in the distal end. The quasi-chevron shaped slots have a narrower proximal part 38' and wider distal part 39' in the proximal slot, and a wider proximal part 40'' and narrower distal part

41' in the distal slot.

A third expansion column 32''' includes of a plurality of first expansion strut 42''' pairs of dissimilar chevron-shape in upright position. A first expansion strut pair includes a first expansion strut 42''' of a quasi-chevron shape, which has a stair-step or "stepped bridge" configuration with a vertex or apex 33''' at the center, adjacent to a second expansion strut 42''' of a symmetrical chevron-shape with a vertex or apex 43''' at the center. A first joining strut 46''' couples the first and second expansion struts 42''' at a proximal end of a first expansion strut pair to form a first closed loop 48'''.

When a first expansion strut pair is joined by a first joining strut 46''' to form a closed loop 48'', a quasi-chevron shaped slot is formed inside the first expansion strut pair closed loop 48''' with a proximal narrow section 38''' and a distal wide section 39'', due to a dissimilar chevron-shapes of the first and second expansion struts 42''' in a third expansion column 32'''.

A second expansion strut pair includes a third expansion strut of a quasi-chevron shape, which has a stair-step or "stepped bridge" configuration with a vertex or apex 33' at the center, adjacent to a second expansion strut 42''' of a symmetrical chevron-shape with a vertex or apex 43''' at the center. A second joining strut 46''' couples the third and second expansion struts 42''' of dissimilar chevron-shape at a distal end of a second expansion strut pair to form a closed loop 48'''.

When a second expansion strut 42''' pair is joined by a first joining strut 46''' to form a closed loop 48'', a quasi- chevron shaped slot is formed inside the second expansion strut pair closed loop 48''' with a proximal wider section 40''' and a distal narrower section 41'', due to the dissimilar chevron-shapes of the second and third expansion struts 42''' of a second expansion strut pair.

A third expansion strut pair includes a fourth expansion strut 42''' of a symmetrical chevron-shape with a vertex or apex 43''' at the center, adjacent to a third expansion strut 42''' of a quasi-chevron shape, which has a stair-step or "stepped bridge" configuration with a vertex or apex 33''' at the center. A third joining strut 46''' couples the third and fourth expansion struts 42''' of

dissimilar chevron-shapes at a proximal end of a third expansion strut pair to form a closed loop 48'''. When a third expansion strut pair is joined by a third joining strut 46''' to form a closed loop 48''', a quasi-chevron shaped slot is formed inside the third expansion strut pair closed loop 48''' with a proximal narrower section 38''' and a distal wider section 39''', due to the dissimilar chevron-shape configurations of the fourth and third expansion struts 42'''.

A fourth expansion strut pair includes a fifth expansion strut 42''' of a quasi-chevron shape, which has a stair-step or "stepped bridge" configuration with a vertex or apex 33''' at the center, adjacent to a fourth expansion strut of a symmetrical chevron-shape with a vertex or apex 43''' at the center. A fourth joining strut 46''' couples the fourth and fifth expansion struts 42''' of dissimilar chevron-shape at a distal end of a fourth expansion strut pair to form a closed loop 48'''. When a fourth expansion strut pair is joined by a fourth joining strut 46''' to form a closed loop 48''', a quasi-chevron shaped slot is formed inside the fourth expansion strut pair closed loop 48''' with a proximal wider section 40''' and a distal narrower section 41''', due to the dissimilar chevron-shapes of the fourth and fifth expansion struts 42''' of a fourth expansion strut pair.

These expansion strut pairs of two dissimilar chevron-shapes coupled by a joining strut 46''' to form a closed loop 48''' in an alternating proximal or distal end of the expansion strut pairs can be repeated to make the prescribed number of continuous chain of expansion strut pairs around the circumference 18 in an unbroken fashion in the stent 10 of present invention. A set of two consecutive chevron-shaped expansion strut pairs in opposite directions in an unbroken sequence is called expansion strut cycles. In this application, Figure 1 & 3 contain six (6) chevron-shaped expansion strut pair cycles or twelve (12) chevron-shaped expansion strut pairs in a third expansion column 32''' in the 2-dimensional cut-open drawings of the unexpanded stent 10 of present invention. However, the number of chevron-shaped expansion strut pairs or expansion strut pair cycles in a third expansion column 32''' can variably be changed

according to the application requirements of the specific stent 10 made.
Variation in the number of expansion strut pair or expansion strut pair cycle in a third expansion column 32''' is within the scope of a tubular stent 10 of present invention.

5 Although the illustrations in this application shows only a neutrally arranged upright expansion strut pairs of chevron-configuration within the third 32''' expansion strut column, the expansion strut pairs of chevron-configuration can be arranged in any tilted angulation within the third expansion column 32'''. The first and second expansion struts 42''' of dissimilar chevron-shape in
10 a first expansion strut pair in a third expansion column 32''' are parallel to each other; with the longitudinal axis 58''' of proximal half section of the stair-step or "stepped bridge" chevron strut 42''' to the longitudinal axis 60''' of proximal half section of the symmetrical chevron strut 42'', and the longitudinal axis 59''' of distal half section of the stair-step chevron strut 42''' to the
15 longitudinal axis 61''' of distal half section of the symmetrical chevron strut 42'''. But the first and second expansion struts 42''' of dissimilar chevron-shape in a first expansion strut pair do not parallel to the longitudinal axis 17 of the tubular stent 10. However, the first and second expansion struts 42''' of dissimilar chevron-shape in a first expansion strut pair in a third expansion
20 column 32''' do not have to parallel to each other. Both the parallel and non-parallel arrangement of the first and second expansion struts 42''' of chevron-shape in a first expansion strut pair in a third expansion column 32''' are within the scope of a tubular stent 10 of present invention. Furthermore, first and second expansion struts 42''' of chevron-shape in a first expansion strut pair can
25 be made of similar chevron patterns in a third expansion column 32''' The proximal section 58'' of the first expansion strut 42'' of a first expansion strut pair in a second expansion column 32'' is parallel to the distal section 59''' of a first expansion strut 42''' of a first expansion strut pair in the third expansion column 32'''. The second section 59'' of a first expansion strut 42'' of a first
30 expansion strut pair in a second expansion column 32' parallels to a first section

58''' of a first expansion strut 42''' of a first expansion strut pair in a third expansion column 32'''. The proximal section 60'' of the first expansion strut 42'' of a first expansion strut pair in a second expansion column 32'' is parallel to the distal section 61''' of a first expansion strut 42''' of a first expansion strut pair in the third expansion column 32'''. The second section 61'' of a first expansion strut 42'' of a first expansion strut pair in a second expansion column 32'' parallels to a first section 60''' of a first expansion strut 42''' of a first expansion strut pair in a third expansion column 32'''. Although in FIGURE 2 & FIGURE 3, certain sections of first strut pair in the second expansion column 32'' parallels to a corresponding certain sections of first strut pair in the third expansion column 32''', these respective sections in a second expansion column 32'' and third expansion column 32''' do not have to parallel to each other. This parallel or non-parallel variation of the sections of expansion struts 42'' in a second expansion column 32'' and the sections of expansion struts 42''' in a third expansion column 32''' is within the scope of stent 10 of present invention.

In the third expansion column 32''', a first expansion strut pair first corner 54''' is formed where the first joining strut 46''' is coupled to the first expansion strut 42''', and a first expansion strut pair second corner 56''' is formed where the first joining strut 46''' is coupled to the second expansion strut 42'''. A second expansion strut pair first corner 54''' is formed where the second joining strut 46''' is coupled to the second expansion strut 42''', and a second expansion strut pair second corner 56''' is formed where the second joining strut 46''' is coupled to the third expansion strut 42'''. A third expansion strut pair first corner 54''' is formed where the third joining strut 46''' is coupled to the third expansion strut 42''', and a third expansion strut pair second corner 56''' is formed where the third joining strut 46''' is coupled to the fourth expansion strut 42'''. A fourth expansion strut pair first corner 54''' is formed where the fourth joining strut 46''' is coupled to the fourth expansion strut 42''', and a fourth expansion strut pair second corner 56''' is

formed where the fourth joining strut 42''' is coupled to the fifth expansion strut 42'''. Likewise, a series of expansion strut pair are being joined by a respective joining strut 46''' to form the first 54''' and second 56''' corners until a prescribed set of joined expansion strut pairs is reached to form a stent 10 of present invention.

A second connecting strut column 34'' is formed of a plurality of second connecting struts 44''. Each second connecting strut 44'' in a second connecting strut column 34'' includes a connecting strut proximal section, a connecting strut distal section and a connecting strut intermediate section 74''. A first connecting strut proximal section has two parts; a first short part or stem 66'' that is coupled at a perpendicular or slant angle to the outer side of the distal end of a second expansion strut 42'' of second expansion strut pair in a second expansion column 32'', and a second long part 68'' that is coupled to the first short part 66'' proximally and to the intermediate section 74' distally. The second long part 68'' of first connecting strut 44'' proximal section generally parallels to the distal half section of a second expansion strut 42'' of chevron-shape of first expansion strut pair in a second expansion column 32'', although the second long part 68'' can be made non-parallel to the distal half section of a second expansion strut 42'' of chevron-shape of first expansion strut pair in a second expansion column 32'', as an alternative configuration. A first connecting strut 44'' distal section also has two parts; a first short part or stem 70'' that is coupled at a perpendicular or slant angle to the outer side of the proximal end of a second expansion strut 42'' of chevron-shape of a first expansion strut pair in a third expansion column 32''', and a second long part 72'' that is coupled to the first short part 70'' distally and to the intermediate section 74'' proximally. The second long part 72'' generally parallels to the proximal half of a second expansion strut 42''' of chevron-shape of a first expansion strut pair in a third expansion column 32''', although the second long part 72'' can be made non-parallel to the proximal half of a second expansion strut 42''' of chevron-shape of a first expansion strut pair in a third

expansion column 32''', as an alternative configuration. A first connecting strut 44'' intermediate section 74'' proximal end is coupled at a slant angle to the distal end of first connecting strut 44'' proximal section long part 68'' at a junction 76'', and the first connecting strut 44'' intermediate section 74'' distal end is coupled at a slant angle to the proximal end of a first connecting strut distal section long part 72'' at a junction 78''. The intermediate section 74'' of a first connecting strut 44'' traverses diagonally through the inter-connecting space between a second expansion strut pair closed loop 48'' in a second expansion column 32'' and a first expansion strut pair closed loop 48''' in a third expansion column 32'''. This diagonal course of the intermediate section 74'' of the first connecting strut 44'' is a key feature for contralaterally attaching the proximal end 62'' and distal end 64'' of a first connecting strut 44'' to the opposite or contralateral sides of the two apposed closed loop 48'', 48''' respectively in a second expansion column 32'' and a third expansion column 32'''. Because they attach to the opposite sides of the two apposed closed loops 48'', 48''' in a second 32'' and third 32''' expansion columns respectively, the proximal end 62'' and distal end 64'' of a first connecting strut 44'' point to the opposite directions as they join to the respective attachment sites.

The vertical orientation of the second connecting struts 44'' in a second connecting column 34'' is 180 degrees upside down (or a mirror image) in comparison to the vertical orientation of the first connecting struts 44' in a first connecting column 34'. This alternating mirror image orientation of the connecting struts 44', 44'' in two adjacent connecting strut columns 34', 34'' continues as the length of a tubular stent 10 is added longitudinally. This alternating vertical orientation of the connecting struts 44 in adjacent connecting columns 34 is designed to prevent axial warping of the stent 10 during the process of passive expansion by a high pressure expansion balloon.

There are six (6) connecting struts 44'' in the second connecting column 34''. Each of these six (6) connecting strut 44'' attaches to their respective

attachment sites in the second expansion column 32'' proximally and in the third 32''' expansion column distally, like the first connecting strut 44' described above in an unbroken fashion around the circumference 18 of the stent 10, to form a tubular structure . When an unbroken tubular stent structure 10 is formed by a second 32'' and third 32''' expansion columns and a second connecting column 34'', six (6) asymmetrical stent cells 36'' are defined in the stent 10. Each stent cell 36'' has quasi-chevron shaped slots at the proximal end and at the distal end. Each cell 36'' has a narrower proximal section 38'' and wider distal section 39'' in the proximal slot, and a wider proximal section 40''' and narrower distal section 41''' in the distal slot.

The foregoing description of a preferred embodiment of the invention has been presented for purposes of illustration and description. It is not intended to be exhaustive or to limit the invention to the precise forms disclosed. Obviously, many modifications and variations will be apparent to practitioners skilled in this art. It is intended that the scope of the invention be defined by the following claims and their equivalents.

I claim:

CLAIMS

1. A circumferentially connected stent in a non-expanded state with a longitudinal axis, comprising:

5 a first expansion column strut pair including a first expansion strut, a second expansion strut and a joining strut, the first expansion column strut pair defining a chevron shaped slot, a plurality of the first expansion strut pair forming a first expansion column;

10 a second expansion column strut pair including a first expansion strut, a second expansion strut and a joining strut, the second expansion column strut pair defining a chevron shaped slot, a plurality of the second expansion strut pair forming a second expansion column; and

a first serial connecting strut column formed of a plurality of first connecting struts, the first connecting strut column coupling the first expansion column to the second expansion column.

15 2. The stent of claim 1, wherein each of the first expansion column strut pair and the second expansion column strut pair define a quasi-chevron shaped slot.

3. The stent of claim 1, wherein the first and second expansion columns and the first connecting strut column form asymmetric cells.

20 4. The stent of claim 1, wherein the first and second expansion struts of the first and second expansion columns each have a first section and a second section.

25 5. The stent of claim 4, wherein the first and second sections of the first expansion strut of the first expansion column strut pair are coupled with a stepped bridge section, and the first and second sections of the first expansion strut of the second expansion column strut pair are coupled with a stepped

bridge section.

6. The stent of claim 5, wherein the first and second sections of the second expansion strut of the first expansion column strut pair are coupled to form a first apex, and the first and second sections of the second expansion strut
5 of the second expansion column strut pair are coupled to form a second apex.

7. The stent of claim 6, wherein the first apices of the first expansion column all extend in a same direction.

8. The stent of claim 6, wherein the second apices of the second expansion column all extend in a same direction.

10 9. The stent of claim 6, wherein the first and second apices extend in opposite directions.

10. The stent of claim 6, wherein the first section of the first expansion strut of the first expansion column strut pair and the first section of the second expansion strut of the first expansion column strut pair are separated
15 by a first length, and the second section of the first expansion strut of the first expansion column strut pair and the second section of the second expansion strut of the first expansion column strut pair are separated by a second length, wherein the first length is greater than the second length.

11. The stent of claim 4, wherein the first section of the first expansion strut of the first expansion column strut pair has a longitudinal axis
20 that is parallel to a longitudinal axis of the second section of the first expansion strut of the second expansion column strut pair.

12. The stent of claim 11, wherein the second section of the first expansion strut of the first expansion column strut pair has a longitudinal axis

that is parallel to a longitudinal axis of the first section of the first expansion strut of the second expansion column strut pair.

13. The stent of claim 12, wherein the first section of the second expansion strut in the first expansion column strut pair has a longitudinal axis that is parallel to a longitudinal axis of the second section of the second expansion strut of the second expansion column strut pair.

14. The stent of claim 13, wherein the second section of the second expansion strut in the first expansion column strut pair has a longitudinal axis that is parallel to a longitudinal axis of the first section of the second expansion strut of the second expansion column strut pair.

15. The stent of claim 1, wherein each of the first serial connecting struts has a proximal portion with a proximal stem, a distal portion with a distal stem and an intermediate portion that couples the proximal and distal portions.

16. The stent of claim 15, wherein the intermediate portion of the first serial connecting strut diagonally couples the proximal and distal portions.

17. The stent of claim 15, wherein the first serial connecting strut contralaterally couples the second section of the second expansion strut of the first expansion column strut pair to the first section of the first expansion strut of the second expansion column strut pair.

18. The stent of claim 15, wherein the proximal stem of the first serial connecting strut is coupled to a side of the second section of the second expansion strut of the first expansion column strut pair.

19. The stent of claim 18, wherein the proximal stem of the first serial connecting strut is coupled to the side of the second section of the second expansion strut at a connect angle of 85° or greater, wherein the connect angle is formed closest to the apex..

20. The stent of claim 18, wherein the proximal stem of the first serial connecting strut is coupled to the side of the second section of the second expansion strut at a connect angle of about 90° or greater, wherein the connect angle is formed closest to the apex..

5 21. The stent of claim 18, wherein the distal portion of the first serial connecting strut is coupled to a side of the first section of the first expansion strut of the second expansion column strut pair.

10 22. The stent of claim 21, wherein the distal stem of the first serial connecting strut is coupled to the side of the first section of the first expansion strut at a connect angle of 85° or greater, wherein the connect angle is formed closest to the stepped bridge.

15 23. The stent of claim 21, wherein the distal stem of the first serial connecting strut is coupled to the side of the first section of the first expansion strut at a connect angle of about 90° or greater, wherein the connect angle is formed closest to the stepped bridge.

24. The stent of claim 1, wherein a ratio of a number of expansion struts in an expansion strut column to a number of serial connecting struts in a connecting strut column is 2 to 1.

20 25. The stent of claim 1, wherein the stent includes m first and second expansion columns, n expansion struts per column and $n(m-1)/2$ serial connecting struts.

26. The stent of claim 1, wherein the first and second expansion columns are each unbroken, continuous structures.

25 27. The stent of claim 1, wherein a portion of the plurality of first expansion strut pairs in the first expansion column are coupled by the plurality of first serial connecting struts to a portion of the plurality of second expansion strut pairs of the second expansion column.

30 28. The stent of claim 27, wherein a portion of the plurality of first expansion strut pairs in the first expansion column are not coupled by the plurality of first serial connecting struts to a portion of the plurality of second

expansion strut pairs of the second expansion column.

29. The stent of claim 1, wherein a portion of the plurality of first serial connecting struts have different widths.

5 30. The stent of claim 1, wherein a width of a portion of the expansion struts in the first expansion column is substantially the same as a width of a portion of the first connecting struts in the first serial connecting strut column.

10 31. The stent of claim 1, wherein a width of the expansion struts in the first expansion column is different from the widths of the plurality of first connecting struts in the first serial connecting strut column.

32. A stent in a non-expanded state, comprising:
a first expansion column formed of a plurality of first expansion column strut pairs, a first expansion strut pair including a first expansion strut coupled to an adjacent second expansion strut, a second expansion strut pair including a
15 third expansion strut coupled to the second expansion strut, and a third expansion strut pair including a fourth expansion strut coupled to the third expansion strut;

a second expansion column formed of a plurality of second expansion column strut pairs, a first expansion strut pair including a first expansion strut
20 coupled to an adjacent second expansion strut, a second expansion strut pair including a third expansion strut coupled to the second expansion strut, and a third expansion strut pair including a fourth expansion strut coupled to the third expansion strut;

a first connecting strut column formed of a plurality of connecting struts
25 including a first connecting strut coupling a side of the second expansion strut of the first expansion column to a side of the first expansion strut of the second expansion column, and a second expansion strut coupling a side of the fourth expansion strut in the first expansion column to a side of the third expansion strut of the second expansion column; and

30 a third expansion column formed of a plurality of third expansion

column strut pairs, a first expansion strut pair including a first expansion strut coupled to an adjacent second expansion strut, a second expansion strut pair including a third expansion strut coupled to the second expansion strut, and a third expansion strut pair including a fourth expansion strut coupled to the third expansion strut, each of the expansion strut pairs of the first, second and third expansion columns having a chevron geometric configuration; and

a second connecting strut column formed of a plurality of connecting struts including a first connecting strut coupling a side of the second expansion strut of the second expansion column to a side of the second expansion strut of the third expansion column, and a second connecting strut coupling a side of the fourth expansion strut of the second expansion column to a side of the fourth expansion strut of the third expansion column.

33. The stent of claim 32, wherein each of the expansion strut pairs of the first, second and third expansion columns has a quasi-chevron geometric configuration.

34. The stent of claim 32, wherein in the first expansion column a first joining strut couples distal ends of the first and second expansion struts, a second joining strut couples proximal ends of the second and third expansion struts, and a third joining strut couples distal ends of the third and fourth expansion struts.

35. The stent of claim 34, wherein in the second expansion column a first joining strut couples proximal ends of the first and second expansion struts, a second joining strut couples distal ends of the second and third expansion struts, and a third joining strut couples proximal ends of the third and fourth expansion struts.

36. The stent of claim 35, wherein in the third expansion column a first joining strut couples proximal ends of the first and second expansion struts, a second joining strut couples distal ends of the second and third expansion struts, and a third joining strut couples proximal ends of the third and fourth expansion struts.

37. The stent of claim 35, wherein the second and third expansion struts and the second joining strut of the first expansion column define a first slot, and the second and third expansion struts and the second joining strut of the second expansion column define a second slot.

5 38. The stent of claim 36, wherein in the first expansion column the second and third expansion struts, the second and third joining struts, in the second expansion column the second and third expansion struts, the first and second joining struts, and in the first connecting strut column the first and second expansion struts, all collectively define a first cell.

10 39. The stent of claim 37, wherein the first cell has an asymmetric geometric configuration.

40. The stent of claim 37, wherein in the second expansion column the third and fourth expansion struts and the third joining strut define a third slot.

15 41. The stent of claim 40, wherein the second slot is positioned adjacent to the third slot.

42. The stent of claim 40, wherein in the second expansion column the third and fourth expansion struts, the second and third joining struts, in the third expansion column the second and third expansion struts, and the second and third joining struts, and in the second connecting strut column the first and second connecting struts, all collectively define a second cell.

20 43. The stent of claim 42, wherein the second cell has an asymmetric geometric configuration.

44. The stent of claim 42, wherein each of the first and second cells have chevron shaped slots formed at a cell proximal end and a cell distal end.

25 45. The stent of claim 42, wherein each of the first and second cells have quasi-chevron shaped slots formed at a cell proximal end and a cell distal end.

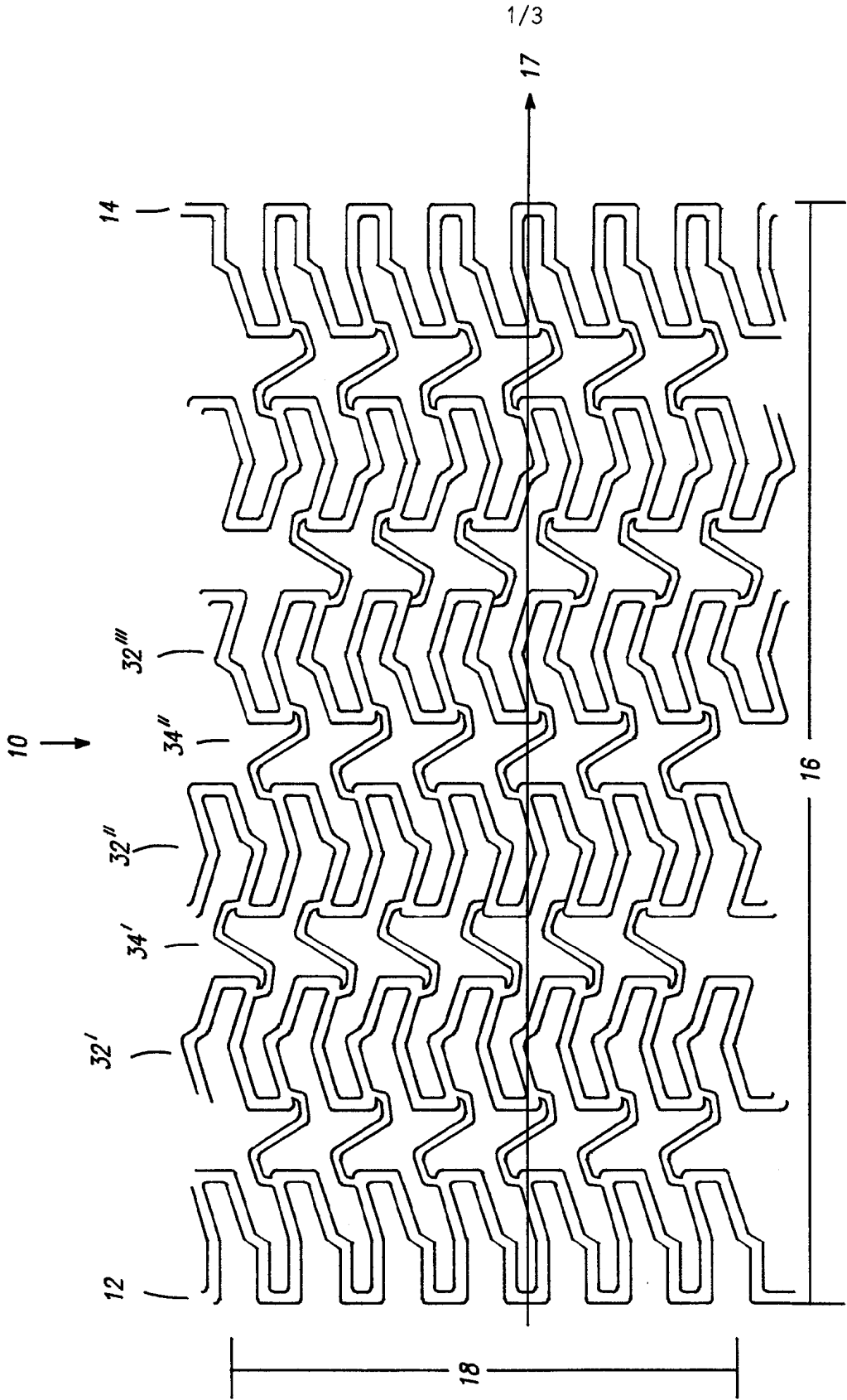


FIG. - 1

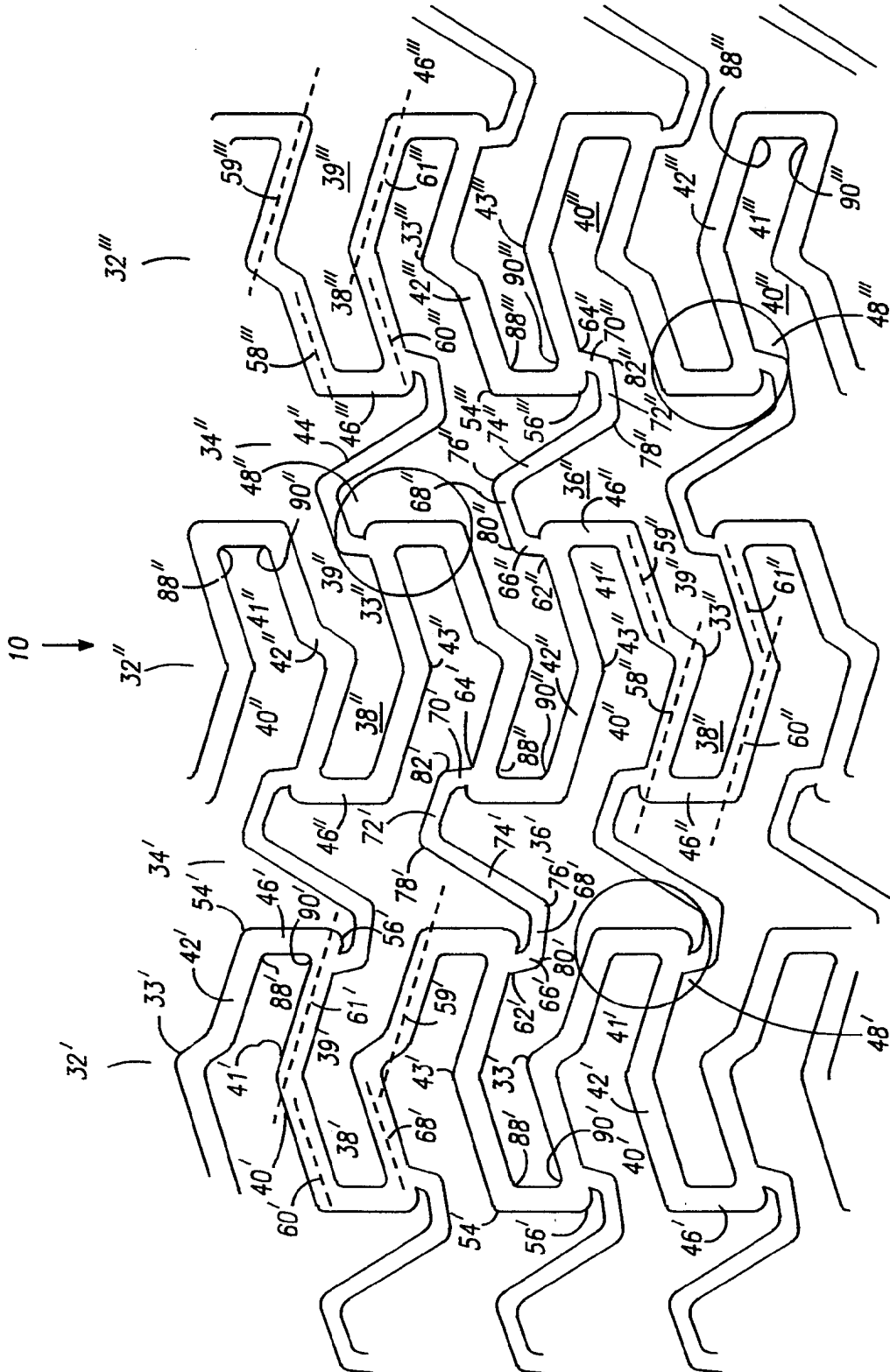


FIG. -2

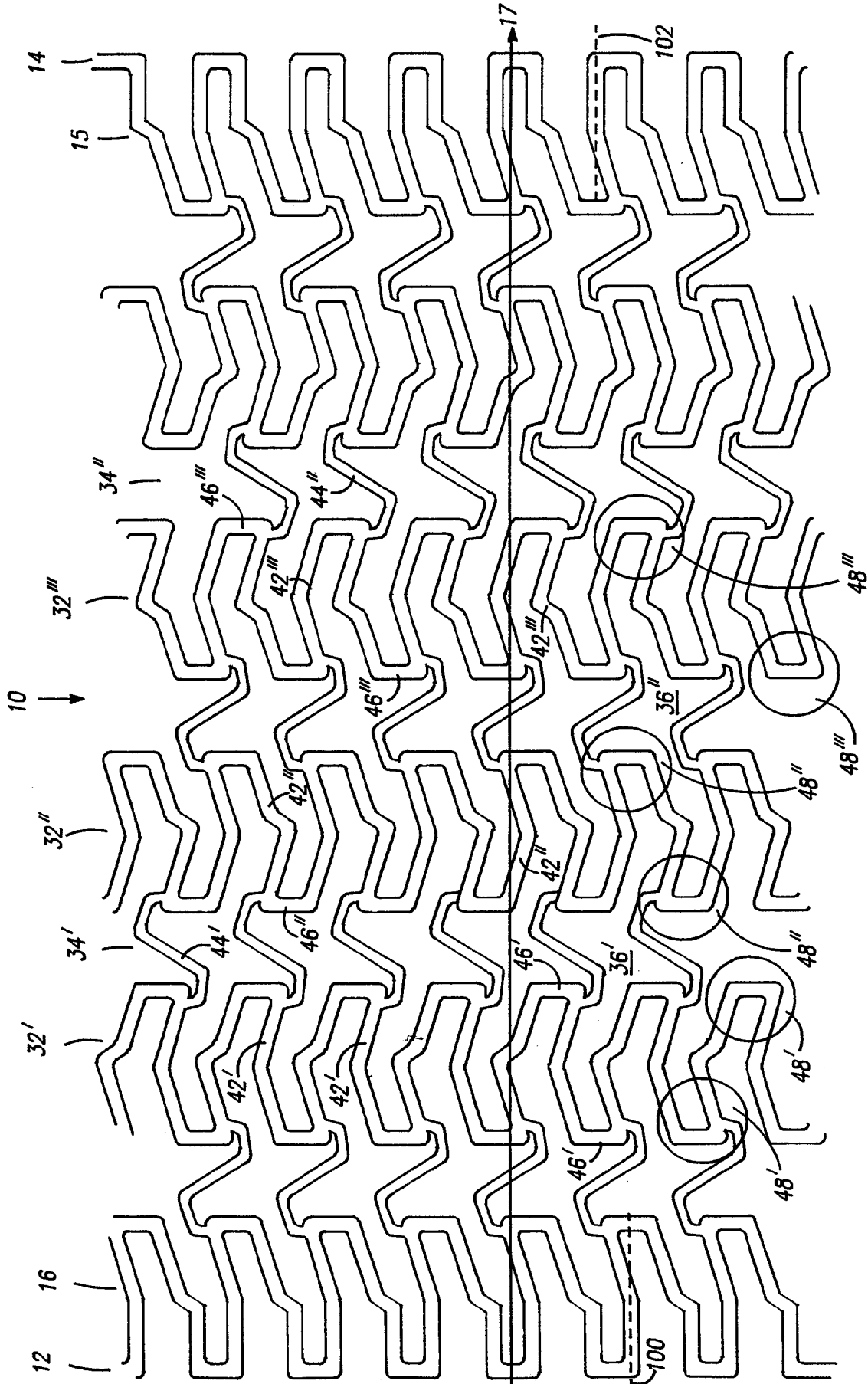


FIG. -3

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No

PCT/US 99/02050

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC 6 A61F2/06

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC 6 A61F

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category °	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
E	WO 99 15107 A (JANG G DAVID) 1 April 1999 see figure 3	32
A	see page 8, line 13 - page 10, line 2 see page 11, line 19 - page 13, line 26 see claim ALL ----	1-31, 33-45
A	WO 97 32543 A (DIVYSIO SOLUTIONS LTD ; PENN IAN M (CA); RICCI DONALD R (CA)) 12 September 1997 see figures 8,12 see page 15, line 29 - page 16, line 7 see page 17, line 25 - page 18, line 31 ----- -/--	1,32

☒ Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.

☒ Patent family members are listed in annex.

° Special categories of cited documents :

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"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means

"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention

"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone

"Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art.

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Date of the actual completion of the international search

1 June 1999

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10/06/1999

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No
PCT/US 99/02050

C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
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A,P	WO 98 40035 A (UNITED STATES SURGICAL CORP) 17 September 1998 see figures 1,7,12 see page 8, line 10 - line 27 see page 9, line 18 - line 27 see page 10, line 13 - line 25 see page 11, line 10 - line 22 see page 13, line 6 - line 21 -----	1-45

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